

How to Vote From Home

Every state allows absentee voting: In most cases, you fill out a ballot at home, then send it in before election day. However, rules vary. For instance, some states require you to meet specific conditions, such as being disabled, or out of town on election day.

Here's a state-by-state guide to voting absentee by mail, including Web sites with ballot-request forms or other information. Some states also allow "early" voting: You can place your vote before election day, in person, at town or county offices. To learn more about whether your state offers an option like this, check the Web sites below for contact information for your region.

STATE/DISTRICT: Alabama
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.al.us/election

STATE/DISTRICT: Alaska
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.ltgov.state.ak.us/elections/

STATE/DISTRICT: Arizona
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.azsos.gov/election/, click "Contact your County Elections Department"

STATE/DISTRICT: Arkansas
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sosweb.state.ar.us, click "Elections," then "Voter," then "Voting in Arkansas"

STATE/DISTRICT: California
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.ss.ca.gov/elections

STATE/DISTRICT: Colorado
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.co.us, click "Elections Center," then click "2004 Election Information"

STATE/DISTRICT: Connecticut
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sots.state.ct.us, click "I Voted Today"

STATE/DISTRICT: Delaware
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.delaware.gov

STATE/DISTRICT: District of Columbia
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.dcboee.org, click "Downloadable Forms"

STATE/DISTRICT: Florida
(MORE)
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No

WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.dos.state.fl.us/, click "Local Supervisor of Elections"

STATE/DISTRICT: Georgia
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes**
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.ga.us, click "Elections/Voter Information"

STATE/DISTRICT: Hawaii
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.hawaii.gov/elections/voteab.html

STATE/DISTRICT: Idaho
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.idsos.state.id.us, click "Elections . . .," then "2004 General Election Voters' Guide"

STATE/DISTRICT: Illinois
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.elections.state.il.us/, click "Voting Information," then "County Clerks . . ."*

STATE/DISTRICT: Indiana
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes**
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.in.gov/sos/elections/

STATE/DISTRICT: Kansas
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.kssos.org,
click "Elections & Legislative," then "Registration & Voting," then "Advance Voting"

STATE/DISTRICT: Kentucky
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.kysos.com,
click "Elections," then "Voter Information Guide," then "Elected Officials,"
then "County Clerks"*

STATE/DISTRICT: Louisiana
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes***
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sec.state.la.us/elections

STATE/DISTRICT: Maine
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.maine.gov/sos/,
click "Elections & Voting"

STATE/DISTRICT: Maryland
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.electionsmaryland.com

STATE/DISTRICT: Massachusetts
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/

STATE/DISTRICT: Michigan

NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.michigan.gov/sos, click "Elections in Michigan," then "Information for Voters"*

STATE/DISTRICT: Minnesota
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.mn.us/election, click "Voting Information"

STATE/DISTRICT: Mississippi
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.ms.us, click "Elections"*

STATE/DISTRICT: Missouri
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.mo.gov/section4.asp

STATE/DISTRICT: Montana
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.mt.us, click "Election Information," then "Voter Information"

STATE/DISTRICT: Nebraska
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.ne.us, click "Elections," then "Voter Information . . ."*

STATE/DISTRICT: Nevada
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.secretaryofstate.biz/nvelection, click "County Clerk . . ."*

STATE/DISTRICT: New Hampshire
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.nh.gov/electionsnew.htm, click "2004 Election . . ."*

STATE/DISTRICT: New Jersey
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.njelections.org

STATE/DISTRICT: New Mexico
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.nm.us, click "Bureau of Elections"

STATE/DISTRICT: New York
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.elections.state.ny.us, click on "Absentee Voting"

STATE/DISTRICT: North Carolina
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sboe.state.nc.us/, click "County Offices"*

STATE/DISTRICT: North Dakota
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.state.nd.us/SEC/, click "Elections and Voting," then "Voting"

STATE/DISTRICT: Ohio
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.oh.us/sos, click "Voter Information," then "Directories," then "Boards of Elections"*

STATE/DISTRICT: Oklahoma
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.elections.state.ok.us, scroll almost halfway down

STATE/DISTRICT: Oregon
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: All Oregon residents get ballots by mail automatically by about Oct. 22

STATE/DISTRICT: Pennsylvania
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.dos.state.pa.us, click "Voting in PA," then "How to Vote"

STATE/DISTRICT: Rhode Island
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.elections.ri.gov/boards.htm*

STATE/DISTRICT: South Carolina
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.state.sc.us/scsec, click "Voting"*

STATE/DISTRICT: South Dakota
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sdsos.gov/absentee.htm

STATE/DISTRICT: Tennessee
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes****
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.state.tn.us/sos/, click "Elections"*

STATE/DISTRICT: Texas
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes****
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sos.state.tx.us/, click "Elections & Voter Information," then "Voter Information," then "Early Voting"

STATE/DISTRICT: Utah
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.elections.utah.gov/absenteevoting.html

STATE/DISTRICT: Vermont
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sec.state.vt.us/, click "Elections," then "Voters"

STATE/DISTRICT: Virginia
NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes
WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
www.sbe.virginia.gov

STATE/DISTRICT: Washington

NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No

WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.vote.wa.gov,
click "Register to Vote," then scroll down*

STATE/DISTRICT: West Virginia

NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: Yes****

WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: www.wvsos.com/,
click "Voter Information," then "Voting/ Absentee Voting," then "More About
Absentee . . ."*

STATE/DISTRICT: Wisconsin

NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No

WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED:
elections.state.wi.us (don't type www.)

STATE/DISTRICT: Wyoming

NEED EXCUSE TO VOTE ABSENTEE BY MAIL?: No

WEB SITE WHERE ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST FORMS ARE LOCATED: County clerk
contact information is at soswy.state.wy.us/ , click "Directory," then
"County Officials . . ."* (don't type www.)

* These states don't have a single form; go to the Web address for a list
of contacts for local election officials and information on their ballot
request procedures.

** In these states, you need a reason to vote absentee by mail, but you
don't need one to vote early in person. If you're going to use being out of
town as your reason, you only need to be gone on Election Day to request the
ballot. You don't have to be out of town during the early voting period too.

*** Louisiana also has an early voting period, but you can only vote then
if you have an approved reason why you can't vote on Election Day. If you're
going to use being out of town as your reason for requesting a ballot by
mail, you need to be gone both on Election Day and during the early voting
period in order to get one.

**** In these states, you need a reason to vote absentee by mail, but you
don't need one to vote early in person. If you're going to use being out of
town as your reason, you have to be gone both on Election Day and during the
state's early voting period in order to get a ballot by mail.

Source: WSJ Research